

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests that the foregoing amendments be made prior to examination of the present application.

Claims 138, 139, 153, 162, 164 are currently being amended.

Claims 108-111, 124, 132, 138, 141-149, 151, 152, 158, 160, 163, and 165-167 are withdrawn.

Election

Applicants elect Species F, with traverse.

Applicants have withdrawn all claims indicated as belonging to a Group other than F. Applicants also believe that, while not indicated in the Office Action, Claims 109, 142, 144, 147, 152, 158, and 164-167 belong to a species other than Species F and believe that these claims will be withdrawn for the same reason.

By electing Species F, Applicants believe that Claims 102, 104, 105, 112-123, 125-131, 133-137, 139, 140, 150, 153-157, 159, 161-162, and 164 are pending.

For the examiner's convenience, a shortened listing of all pending claims (i.e. with withdrawn claims removed) is attached at the end of this response.

New Claims

Claims 68-70 have been added. Claims 68-70 are believed to belong to Species F. Species F is "drawn to a toaster with a second belt." Claims 68-70 depend from generic claim 154 and recite a toaster with a first belt and a second belt.

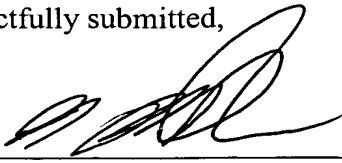
Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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102. (Previously Presented) A contact toaster for toasting bread products comprising:
a heating zone comprising a heating element configured contact and toast a second
face of bread products; and

a belt configured to move the bread product through the heating zone, the belt
comprising,

a reinforcement material having a first face and a second face;
a coating disposed over the first face;
a first plurality of flights raised above the first face of the
reinforcement material; and
a second plurality of flights raised above the second face of the
reinforcement material;

wherein the belt is configured to withstand the temperatures of the heating zone; and
wherein the belt contacts a first face of bread products.

104. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102,
wherein the belt is a first belt, and the apparatus further comprises a second belt comprising at
least one of a chain belt, wire belt, and metal belt, wherein the first belt is configured to be
coupled to the second belt.

105. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102,
wherein the belt is a first belt, and the apparatus further comprises a second belt, wherein the
first belt is mounted such that the second plurality of flights contact the second belt and the
first plurality of flights contact food items.

112. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102,
wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of up to about 0.050 inches.

113. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 112,
wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of at least about 0.020 inches.

114. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102,
wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of at least about 0.020 inches.

115. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102, wherein the belt has a structure that is continuous.

116. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 115, wherein the belt is a first belt and the contact toaster comprises a second belt coupled to the first belt.

117. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 116, wherein the second belt has an open structure.

118. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102, wherein the apparatus is a vertically oriented toasting machine.

119. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102, wherein the belt is configured to move food products through the heating zone such that food products will slide along a stationary toasting surface such that the food product is toasted as it slides.

120. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 102, wherein the apparatus is configured to toast items in a continuous toasting operation.

121. (Previously Presented) A contact toaster for toasting bread products comprising:

 a heating zone comprising a heating element configured to contact and toast a second face of bread products; and

 a belt configured to move the bread product through the heating zone, the belt arranged such that the belt contacts a first face of bread products, the belt comprising,

 a reinforcement material having a first face and a second face;

 a coating disposed over the first face; and

 a first plurality of flights raised above the first face of the reinforcement material.

122. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 121, wherein the apparatus is a vertically oriented toasting machine.

123. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 121,

wherein the belt is configured to move food products through the heating zone such that food products will slide along a stationary toasting surface such that the food product is toasted as it slides.

125. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 121, wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of up to about 0.050 inches.

126. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 125, wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of at least about 0.020 inches.

127. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 121, wherein the first plurality of flights have a height of at least about 0.020 inches.

128. (Previously Presented) A contact toaster for toasting bread products comprising:

a toasting surface configured to toast a first face of bread products; and

a belt configured to be arranged to contact a second face of bread products and move the bread products so that they slide along the toasting surface and toast as they slide, the belt comprising,

a reinforcement material having a first face and a second face;

a coating disposed over the first face; and

a first plurality of flights raised above the first face of the reinforcement material.

129. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128, wherein the belt further comprises a second plurality of flights raised above the second face of the reinforcement material.

130. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128, wherein the apparatus is a vertically oriented toasting machine.

131. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128, wherein the apparatus is configured to toast buns.

133. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128, wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of up to about 0.050 inches.

134. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 133, wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of at least about 0.020 inches.

135. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128, wherein at least one of the first plurality of flights have a height of at least about 0.020 inches.

136. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128, wherein

the belt comprises

a material that is at least one of coated and laminated over the first face of the reinforcement material;

a lacing on at least one of a narrow ends of the belt;

a flap on at least one of a narrow end of the belt;

a second plurality of ribs above the second face of the reinforcement material, the second plurality of ribs comprising a plurality of straight ribs transverse to a longitudinal direction of the belt;

wherein the first plurality of flights comprise a plurality of ribs transverse to a longitudinal direction of the belt that are configured to impart lateral force to objects carried by the belt and a pattern of the first plurality of ribs being different than a pattern of the second plurality of ribs; and

wherein the first belt is configured to wrap around a second belt such that a plurality of the second plurality of ribs contact the second belt.

137. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128,

wherein the belt is a first belt, and comprises a second plurality of flights above the second face of the reinforcement material; and

further comprising a second belt arranged such that the first belt wraps around the second belt, the second face of the first belt facing the second belt.

138. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 136 137, wherein the first plurality of flights are formed from beads having a diameter of about one thirty-second of an inch to about one half of an inch.

139. (Currently Amended) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 136 137, wherein the contact toaster is a vertically oriented toasting machine.

140. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster for toasting bread products of claim 128, wherein

the belt is a first belt;

the contact toaster comprises a second belt; and

the first belt comprises a second plurality of flights above the second face of the reinforcement material, the second plurality of flights contacting the first belt.

150. (Previously Presented) A contact toaster for bread products comprising:

a heating element configured to toast food products;

a first belt comprising at least one of a link-type belt and a chain belt;

a first rotating sprocket coupled to the first belt and configured to drive the first belt;

and

a second belt configured to move food products, the second belt comprising,

a reinforcement material having a first face and a second face, the reinforcement material comprising at least one of fiberglass, nylon, polyester, aramid, polyethylene, polyolefin, polyimide, and films thereof;

at least one of a silicone rubber, a urethane rubber, and a fluoropolymer above the first face of the reinforcement material;

at least one of a silicone rubber, a urethane rubber, and a fluoropolymer above the second face of the reinforcement material;

a first plurality of ribs above the first face of the reinforcement material; and

a second plurality of ribs above the second face of the reinforcement material;

wherein the contact toaster is arranged such that,

the first rotating sprocket drives the first belt and the first belt drives the second belt;

the second belt is wrapped around the first belt such that the second face of the second belt faces the first belt;

the first face of the second belt contacts a first face of food products and the heating element toasts a second face of food products; and

food products are moved such that food products will slide along a stationary toasting surface and toast as they slide; and

wherein a pattern of the first plurality of ribs of the second belt is different than a pattern of the second plurality of ribs of the second belt.

153. (Currently Amended) The contact toaster for bread products of claim ~~152~~ 150, wherein the second belt is configured to help retain heat in food products and warm them to serving temperature.

154. (Previously Presented) A vertical contact toaster for use in toasting buns, the toaster comprising:

a toasting surface configured to toast buns, the buns toasted on a first bun surface as they move vertically through the contact toaster;

a belt configured to move buns such that they will slide along the toasting surface, the belt configured such that it contacts a second bun surface, the belt comprising,

a reinforcement material comprising a first face and a second face; and

a first plurality of ribs raised above the first face of the reinforcement material;

the belt being configured such that the belt helps retain heat in buns and warm them to serving temperature;

wherein the vertical contact toaster is configured such that the belt can be used to compress a bun against the stationary toasting surface.

155. (Previously Presented) The vertical contact toaster for use in toasting buns of claim 154, further comprising a second plurality of ribs raised above the second face of the reinforcement material, wherein the belt is a first belt, and the vertical contact toaster further comprises a second belt configured to drive the first belt, the first belt wrapping around the second belt.

156. (Previously Presented) The vertical contact toaster for use in toasting buns of claim 155, further comprising at least one sprocket configured to drive the first belt.

157. (Previously Presented) The vertical contact toaster for use in toasting buns of claim 155, wherein the first plurality of ribs are arranged in a different pattern than the second plurality of ribs.

159. (Previously Presented) A contact toaster for toasting a food product having a first surface and a second surface opposite the first surface, the contact toaster comprising:

a heating element configured to toast the first face of the food product;

a first belt comprising,

a reinforcement material having a first face and a second face;

a coating disposed over the first face of the reinforcement material of the first belt;

a first plurality of flights raised above the first face of the reinforcement material of the first belt; and

at least one flight raised above the second face of the reinforcement material of the first belt;

the first face of the first belt configured to contact the second surface of the food product; and

a second belt configured to contact the second face of the first belt

161. (Previously Presented) The contact toaster of claim 159, wherein the contact toaster is configured to toast bread products.

162. (Currently Amended) A first belt for a contact toaster configured to toast bread products comprising a second belt and a toasting surface, the toasting surface configured to toast a bread product on a first surface different than a surface of the bread product that contacts the first belt as the bread product slides along the toasting surface, the first belt comprising:

a reinforcement material having a first face and a second face;

a coating disposed over the first face; and

a first plurality of flights raised above the first face of the reinforcement material, the first plurality of flights configured to provide lateral force to the bread product; and

a second plurality of flights raised above the second face and configured to contact the second belt;

wherein the first belt is configured to wrap around the second belt of the contact toaster; and

wherein the first belt is configured to be arranged to contact a second surface of the bread product and move bread products so that they slide along the toasting surface and toast as they slide.

164. (Previously Presented) The belt for a contact toaster of claim 163 162, wherein at least one rib has a height of at least about 0.02 inches and up to about 0.05 inches.

168. (New) The vertical contact toaster for use in toasting buns of claim 154, further comprising a second belt, the second belt comprising;

a reinforcement material comprising a first face and a second face; and

a first plurality of ribs raised above the first face of the reinforcement material;

the belt being configured such that the belt helps retain heat in buns and warm them to serving temperature;

wherein the vertical contact toaster is configured to be capable of simultaneously toasting a first bun portion in contact with the first belt and a second bun portion in contact with the second belt.

169. (New) The vertical contact toaster for use in toasting buns of claim 154, wherein the first belt comprises a second plurality of flights raised above the second surface of the reinforcement material of the first belt; and

the second belt comprises a second plurality of flights raised above the second surface of the reinforcement material of the second belt.

170. (New) The vertical contact toaster of claim 169, wherein the first belt further comprises at least one of a silicone rubber, a urethane rubber, and a fluoropolymer above the first face of the reinforcement material of the first belt and at least one of a silicone rubber, a urethane rubber, and a fluoropolymer above the second face of the reinforcement material of the first belt; and the second belt further comprises at least one of a silicone rubber, a urethane rubber, and a fluoropolymer above the first face of the reinforcement material of the second belt and at least one of a silicone rubber, a urethane rubber, and a fluoropolymer above the second face of the reinforcement material of the second belt.